August 22, 2008

ASSIGNMENT OF STATION NUMBER SUFFIX IDENTIFIERS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS (CBOCs)

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive provides policy for the assignment of station number suffix identifiers for Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs).

2. BACKGROUND

- a. In 1994, VHA issued a policy for establishing outpatient clinic suffix identifiers. At that time, outpatient clinics were classified by the number of visits and the station number suffix identifiers based on clinic workload. In November 1997, VHA issued a revised policy with new definitions for outpatient clinics that no longer classified clinic suffix identifiers by the number of visits. Under that policy, station number suffix identifiers were assigned and activated based on a facility's notification to VHA Central Office of the activation of a clinic. With an increased emphasis on the establishment of new CBOCs, VHA recognized the need to improve mechanisms to track CBOCs as soon as they receive Congressional endorsement and Under Secretary for Health approval. This new policy provides a mechanism for improved tracking and reporting of CBOC workload. Under this revised policy, suffix identifiers are to be assigned at the time a CBOC is approved and endorsed. The station suffix identifier is activated upon a facility's 30-day notification to VHA Central Office of the CBOC's activation. Outpatient clinics are no longer categorized based on their achieved or projected number of outpatient visits as previously defined.
- b. Outpatient clinics are not to be sub-categorized by the type of medical or mental health care they are providing. Suffix identifiers for CBOCs no longer imply a designated category.
- c. The suffix modifier ranges for satellite outpatient clinics (BY-B9) and outreach clinics (HA-HJ) will no longer be used as suffix identifiers for CBOCs; however, the suffix identifiers currently assigned to outpatient clinics will not be changed.

d. **Definitions**

- (1) **Hospital-Based Clinics.** Hospital-based clinics refers to outpatient clinic functions located at a parent facility.
- (2) **Independent Clinic.** An Independent Clinic is a full-time, self-contained, freestanding ambulatory care clinic that has senior management, programs, and fiscal functions.
- (3) **Mobile Clinic.** A mobile clinic refers to a specially equipped van with multiple scheduled stops providing outpatient care. A mobile clinic is under the management jurisdiction of a parent medical facility.

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES AUGUST 31, 2013

- (4) **Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).** A CBOC is a VA-operated, VA-funded or reimbursed site of care geographically distinct and separate from a parent medical facility. This term encompasses all types of VA outpatient clinics, except hospital-based, independent, and mobile clinics. Satellite, community-based, and outreach clinics are redefined as CBOCs. CBOCs are not sub-categorized based on the number of projected or actual outpatient visits or by the type of health care service(s) provided. A CBOC can provide primary, specialty, subspecialty, mental health care, or any combination of health care delivery services that can be appropriately provided in an outpatient setting.
- **3. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that all new CBOCs, which must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health and Congressionally endorsed, have a station number suffix identifier using the suffix modifier range previously reserved for community-based clinics (GA-GZ, JA-JZ, and J1-J8); the workload associated with these CBOCs must be reported along with the assigned facility numbers and suffix identifiers.

4. ACTION: The process is as follows:

a. Assignment of the Station Number Suffix Identifier

- (1) As new CBOCs are approved and endorsed, the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) submits a formal request to the Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047) to reserve a station number suffix identifier. The request must include the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN), name of the CBOC(s) and parent facility(ies).
- (2) Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047) reserves station number suffixes for newly-approved CBOCs within 10 working days after receipt of the request, and formally notifies the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) and the Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and Planning's (10A5) field-based Planning Systems Support Group (PSSG), located at the VA Medical Center (00S) in Gainesville, FL.
- (3) The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) notifies the VISN of new station number suffixes by Outlook. The PSSG utilizes this information to update the VA Site Tracking (VAST) database. *NOTE:* New station number suffixes are activated at this point.

b. Activation of the Station Number Suffix Identifier

(1) Requests to activate station suffix identifiers for new CBOCs must be submitted in writing by the parent facility Director through the appropriate VISN Director and Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) to the Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047). Copies of requests must be sent, by the parent

facility, to the PSSG, VA Medical Center (00S) in Gainesville, FL. Requests to activate the facility suffix identifier must be made at least 30 days prior to activation of the CBOC.

- (2) All requests must include the following information:
- (a) Name of CBOC.
- (b) Previously assigned station suffix to be activated.
- (c) Address: street, city, state, and zip code.
- (d) For contracted sites, the number of sites of service included in the contract.
- (e) Activation date.
- (f) Parent facility name and number.
- (3) Within 15 working days after receipt of the official request, the Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047) activates the station number suffix identifiers and makes appropriate distribution of the activation notification within VHA Central Office. *NOTE:* Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047), in coordination with VHA's Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Policy and Planning (10A5) is the official Department source for inquiries regarding the total number of outpatient clinics in operation. The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) notifies the respective VISN of the activated station number suffix identifier.
- c. <u>Requests to Change Station Number Suffixes.</u> Requests to change station number suffixes, due to facility integrations or closures, must be submitted in writing by the parent facility Director through the appropriate VISN Director and Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10NA) directly to the Office of Management, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance (047).

d. Data for all VISN Workload Management (VWM) Reporting Systems

- (1) Data for all VWM reporting systems can be accessed by field stations through the Financial Reporting System at the Corporate Franchise Data Center (CFD). The most recent listing needs to be reviewed to determine if outpatient VWM workload has been accurately reported to the appropriate facility number.
- (2) If it is determined that workload for any outpatient program(s) is not accurately reflected for the proper station number, corrective action is required. Veterans Information Systems Technology Architecture data change instructions are included in the Patient Information Management System Programs.

VHA DIRECTIVE 2008-048 August 22, 2008

5. REFERENCES

- a. VA Manual MP-l, Part II, Chapter 34, VA Uniform Station Numbering.
- b. VHA Supplement to MP-1, Part II, Chapter 34.
- c. MP-6, Part VI, Supplement 1.2.
- d. M-9, Chapter 9, Change 4, Appendix 9G.
- **6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** The Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be addressed to (202) 461-7031.
- **7. RESCISSIONS:** VHA Directive 2001-035 is rescinded. This VHA Directive expires August 31, 2013.

Michael J. Kussman, MD, MS, MACP Under Secretary for Health

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